

Asheville City Council
Planning and Economic Development Committee

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., September 12, 2007
Economic Development Office Conference Room

Minutes

Present: Councilman Jan Davis, Chair; Vice Mayor Holly Jones; Councilwoman Robin Cape; Staff members: Sam Powers, Stephanie Monson, Alan Glines, Shannon Tuch, Nikki Gunter; City Manager Gary Jackson

Guests: Linda Geltz, Ellen Bailey and Russ Towers – Haywood Road Corridor Committee

The Planning and Economic Development Committee met on September 12, 2007 at 29 Haywood Street at 2:00 p.m. Chair Jan Davis called the meeting to order.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the July were approved as read.

2. New Business

None.

3. Updates

Haywood Road Corridor

Linda Geltz, Ellen Bailey and Russ Towers, representing the Haywood Road Corridor Committee, gave the background of their committee as being proactive in preserving a Main Street concept for the area. Part of the area is zoned Central Business District. The group has initiated projects such as street banners and plantings. Another project was repairing and restriping Haywood Road. Zoning is an important element for future growth, which is what they've been working on for the last couple of years. They are proposing a mixed used district in 2 areas, which have approximately 30 properties each.

Mr. Tower commented that the group started the current project in 2005, as a pro-active attempt to preserve the character of a Main Street USA concept. In the Fall of 2005, a committee meeting was held for as a request for input. In the Spring of 2006, 1300 surveys were sent to major stakeholders in the area, and 400 were returned. The surveys indicated that stakeholders were most interested in preserving local businesses, mixed development, walkability, affordability, and no "big box" development. Several follow up meetings were held to confirm the results of the survey.

Some elements of the proposed changes to the Unified Development Ordinance for the area include:

- Maximum of 45,000 square foot development, with no more than 15,000 square foot per floor;
- No more than 48 units per acre;
- 0-15 foot set backs;
- 25 foot set backs if building had a courtyard;
- No minimum parking requirements;
- Building design standard (windows, doors);
- Open Space requirements for bigger developments;
- Minimum of two (2) stories, with a maximum of three (3) and up to five (5) with a conditional use permit – maybe five (5) for properties in the CBD (these would require an overlay);
- Historic districts could be overlays, so have history in overlay.

PED committee members discussed incentives for green building, height limits conditional uses and zoning to allow grocery stores. PED members asked about the community process, and staff responded that they felt like they have been very inclusive of renters, owners and business owners. The CBD is resistant to losing redevelopment potential, and the Conditional Use Process is expensive and stressful. The next step would be to create a mixed-district rubric.

Staff will:

- Look into “story” issue;
- Reduce need for CUPs through incentives Haywood Road Corridor Committee supports;
- Come up with suggestions and guidelines for grocery store issues.

Councilwoman Cape stated that the comparison table presented by the Committee was very helpful. The Haywood Road Corridor Committee asked for clarification of their next step. Staff replied that their next would be a presentation to the Planning and Zoning Committee.

City Owned Property Process

Sam Powers reminded the committee that the City reopened the RFQ process for adjacent property owners of three of the sites; 29 Haywood Street was removed so that all could concentrate on Eagle/Market Street, the Park Maintenance facility and the Civic Center/Haywood Street properties. We only anticipate receiving one additional RFQ. On September 6th, an Open House Information Session was held, with 90 people signing in. To date, 69 surveys have been turned in requesting input as to the public’s goals for both the redevelopment, as well as redevelopment practices.

Downtown Master Plan

Stephanie Monson reported that the entire Downtown Commission will look at the draft of the RFQ at their next meeting, which a sub-committee has put together. It will be the same process as the City-owned property RFQ. The timeline is approximately a year out to going to Council, partially because they

want the new planning director on the “team.” There isn’t a need for an RFP, because the scope of services will be negotiated.

Page Avenue

Staff reported that a building on Page Avenue, which is included in the City RFQ, has excess space. A small amount of the building is used by Sister Cities. Staff and Council receive numerous requests by outside agencies to use the building. Staff is in the process of assessing code issues and costs required to use the building on a short-term basis. Costs may exceed the life of the building.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30p.